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SUMMARY RECORD OF THE 75th MEETING

Chairman: Mr. HADID (Algeria)

Chairman of the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions: Mr. MSELLE

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COMPLETION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

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The meeting was called to order at 3.25 p.m.

AGENDA ITEM 138: ADMINISTRATIVE AND BUDGETARY ASPECTS OF THE FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS (continued)

(a) FINANCING OF THE UNITED NATIONS PEACE-KEEPING OPERATIONS (continued)

Draft resolution A/C.5/48/L.81

1. Mrs. EMERSON (Portugal), Vice-Chairman, introduced the draft resolution, which was the result of informal consultations. She drew particular attention to paragraphs 2 to 5, 8 and 10 and expressed the hope that the draft resolution would be adopted without a vote.

2. Replying to a request for clarification from Ms. SHENWICK (United States of America), she said that it had been agreed during the consultations to replace the words "posts authorized in its" in paragraph 3 with the words "decision contained in".

3. The draft resolution, as amended, was adopted.

4. Ms. SHENWICK (United States of America), explaining her delegation's position on the administrative and budgetary aspects of financing United Nations peace-keeping operations through the support account, said that it had had serious difficulties with the report of the Secretary-General contained in document A/48/470/Add.1. The peace-keeping support account should be used to finance a limited category of staff, principally posts related to administrative and logistical support within the Department of Peace-keeping Operations which were required to provide services at levels above the capacities funded through the regular budget. The only posts justifying support-account funding were, first, posts providing services to a peace-keeping operation at Headquarters which would have been included in a specific peace-keeping budget had the posts been assigned to the field and, secondly, posts at Headquarters providing support for several peace-keeping operations rather than a specific one. Policy-making or research posts should be funded from the regular budget.

5. Her delegation had particular reservations regarding the 26 additional posts for the Department of Administration and Management which had been approved temporarily in March 1994. It noted that the extension of approval for those posts would expire on 31 December 1994. It expected the relevant reports of the Secretary-General and the Advisory Committee on Administrative and Budgetary Questions (ACABQ) to be available early in the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly in order to allow Member States to engage in a serious and substantive debate on that very important issue.

6. Mr. MÜNCH (Germany), speaking on behalf of the States members of the European Union, said that although the European Union regretted that not much progress had been made since the Fifth Committee had last discussed the peace-keeping support account, it welcomed the fact that consensus had been reached.

(Mr. Münch, Germany)

The position stated by the Belgian delegation on behalf of the European Union in the debate on the budget estimates for the biennium 1994-1995 remained valid with respect to the resolution just adopted. Because peace and security were core functions of the United Nations under the Charter, an adequate number of core posts should be financed from the regular budget. The European Union welcomed the intention of the Secretary-General to build up the number of regular budget posts to support and backstop peace-keeping operations and other field missions gradually in future programme budgets and associated itself with the Norwegian delegation's statement at the Committee's 71st meeting.

7. The report of the Secretary-General requested in paragraph 10 of the resolution would enable the Committee to consider the peace-keeping support account more comprehensively, in particular with a view to establishing the long overdue criteria for the use of regular budget funds and peace-keeping support-account funds.

8. Mr. DAMICO (Brazil) said that although his delegation had joined in the consensus, it believed that the Committee should have endorsed the report of ACABQ (A/48/955) in its entirety. He recalled the rationale behind the creation of the support account as set out in paragraph 20 of the Advisory Committee's report.

9. His delegation had misgivings regarding the proposal contained in paragraph 17 of the report of the Secretary-General (A/48/470/Add.1), inasmuch as it would place an additional burden on the regular budget. The building up of the number of posts to support and backstop peace-keeping operations and other field missions would be detrimental to other activities mandated by the Charter. Information provided by the Secretariat during the informal consultations had confirmed that a very substantial number of posts funded from the regular budget were already committed to peace-keeping operations. The 1-to-3 ratio of peace-keeping operations posts funded from the regular budget to those funded from the support account should be retained, since it reflected the relative sizes of the regular budget and the total cost of peace-keeping operations. Those considerations should be taken fully into account in the report requested in paragraph 10 of the resolution.

10. Mr. GOKHALE (India) said that his delegation had joined in the consensus on the draft resolution without prejudice to the broader issue of the scope and use of the support account. His delegation had upheld the Advisory Committee's understanding that the support account had been established to rationalize the use of overload posts already funded from peace-keeping operations which had been created in response to additional burdens in administrative and other areas as a result of the establishment of such operations.

11. The establishment of criteria and principles governing the use of support-account resources and an examination of the intention of the Secretary-General to create a nucleus of posts from the regular budget to backstop peace-keeping operations must proceed after due recognition of the fact that the regular budget already made provision for such activities. Any further proposals for regular-budget funding must be examined after first determining the actual

(Mr. Gokhale, India)

requirements for additional backstopping posts and after it had been determined what the appropriate threshold was for establishing such additional regular-budget posts.

12. His delegation fully endorsed the statement made by the representative of Brazil.

13. Mr. KELLY (Ireland) said that his delegation associated itself fully with the statement made by the representative of Germany on behalf of the States members of the European Union.

14. His delegation was pleased that it had been able to join in the consensus on the resolution just adopted. He emphasized that the report requested in paragraph 10 should comprehensively address the question of the secondment to the United Nations, at no cost to the Organization, of civilian and military personnel from Member States to serve in backstopping positions in the Department of Peace-keeping Operations. The situation was anomalous, given that the personnel concerned were in many cases filling crucial backstopping positions of the type the support account had been established to fund and some positions which could more appropriately be considered core positions to be funded through the regular budget.

15. Ms. GOICOCHEA (Cuba) said that although her delegation had joined in the consensus, it had serious reservations regarding some of its provisions. The Committee should have endorsed all of the suggestions of ACABQ, in particular as outlined in paragraphs 21 and 22 of its report.

16. Although the third preambular paragraph of the resolution claimed to reflect the different views expressed by Member States, the document in fact took a selective and discriminatory approach to the chapters of the budget. Activities relating to economic and social development were very important, and yet the budget devoted to them had been reduced.

17. Her delegation awaited with great interest the Secretary-General's response to the requests contained in paragraphs 9, 10 and 11. With regard to paragraph 11, the Secretary-General should indicate whether support-account funds had in fact been used to finance posts not yet approved by the General Assembly.

18. Mr. MERIFIELD (Canada) and Mr. POLOWCZYK (Poland) endorsed the statement by the representative of Ireland.

19. Mr. JADMANI (Pakistan) said that his delegation associated itself fully with the statements of the representatives of Brazil, India and Cuba.

20. The Secretary-General should clearly justify the need for any additional regular-budget posts to support and backstop peace-keeping operations. Positions required for peace-keeping activities should generally be financed from the support account.

21. Mr. PEÑA (Mexico) said that his delegation fully associated itself with the statements of the representatives of Brazil, India, Cuba and Pakistan. More information was required to justify increasing the number of regular-budget posts to support and backstop peace-keeping operations. The intention of the Secretary-General along those lines must be reflected in the budget estimates for 1996-1997.

Draft decision A/C.5/48/L.90

22. Mrs. EMERSON (Portugal), Vice-Chairman, introducing draft decision A/C.5/48/L.90, pointed out that it was the result of informal consultations.

23. Ms. GOICOCHEA (Cuba) said that her delegation would join in the consensus on draft decision A/C.5/48/L.90; however, it believed that all elements linked with the administrative and budgetary aspects of the financing of the United Nations peace-keeping operations, including reimbursements to troop-contributing countries, were part of a package which should be considered together. Her delegation's acceptance of paragraph (a) of the draft decision did not mean that it wished to accord priority to one aspect of peace-keeping operations; all aspects should be considered together, and decisions should be taken in a global manner.

24. Draft decision A/C.5/48/L.90 was adopted.

(c) OPEN-ENDED WORKING GROUP ON THE PLACEMENT OF MEMBER STATES INTO GROUPS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF PEACE-KEEPING EXPENSES (continued)

25. The CHAIRMAN said that the Rapporteur of the Committee, who was also the Chairman of the Open-ended Working Group, had been unable to attend the meeting. Accordingly, he would himself read out the report on the work of the Open-ended Working Group.

26. The Open-ended Working Group had been established under General Assembly resolution 47/218; in resolution 48/472, the General Assembly had decided to continue the mandate of the Open-ended Working Group during the current session. It had requested the Working Group to consider the representations of the Republic of Belarus and Ukraine to relocate them from Group B to Group C. The Working Group had also received requests from the Czech Republic and Slovakia to be placed in Group C.

27. The Open-ended Working Group had held a number of meetings; during the discussions, several delegations had expressed the view that the Working Group's mandate was limited to considering the placement of Member States into the existing four groups for the purpose of apportioning peace-keeping expenses. Other delegations had taken a broader view of the Working Group's mandate and had felt that its work need not be confined to the placement of Member States into those four groups and that the individual cases of Belarus and Ukraine, as well as those of the Czech Republic and Slovakia, should form part of a comprehensive solution of the issues. Belarus and Ukraine had highlighted the economic hardships they were currently facing and had sought an early decision

(The Chairman)

on their requests, by the Committee itself, if necessary. The Czech Republic and Slovakia had maintained that they were new members of the United Nations and should be treated as such.

28. The delegations participating in the Working Group had generally agreed on the importance of establishing objective standard criteria in place of the existing ad hoc mechanism in order to overcome the recurrent and increasingly difficult problems in the peace-keeping budget. Many had felt that per capita gross domestic product was not in itself a sufficient criterion; however, there had been no substantive discussion on the specific objective and quantifiable criteria which might be used.

29. There had been continued strong support for the principles of General Assembly resolution 3101 (XXVIII), namely, the special responsibilities of the States permanent members of the Security Council; the fact that the economically more developed countries were in a position to make relatively larger contributions; and the fact that the economically less developed countries had a relatively limited capacity to contribute to peace-keeping operations. There had also been a desire to make the peace-keeping scale more transparent and simple in the context of the changing economic situation of Member States and an apparent convergence of opinion that all the least developed countries should be placed in group D.

30. The Working Group had noted that the Secretary-General had sent emissaries to several countries in group C which would be asked to make voluntary contributions that would, in effect, move them in the direction of group B. However, the Working Group was not aware of the outcome of that work, except that one Member State had informed the Secretary-General that it was willing to increase its rate of assessment for peace-keeping contributions.

31. A number of countries had stressed the importance of removing the existing anomalies. It had been noted that the current gaps between the four groups were too wide to allow easy movement of Member States from one group to another. A formulation that might address that problem would be the elimination of the existing groups set up by General Assembly resolution 3101 (XXVIII). To replace that system, a system that paralleled the regular-budget scale of assessments, with a possible additional charge for the permanent members of the Security Council, might be used for the peace-keeping scale. It had also been suggested that, as was the practice for the regular budget of the United Nations, a ceiling of 25 per cent should be applied to the peace-keeping scale. Those had been suggested only as concepts which could be considered as part of comprehensive solutions of the issues before the Working Group. Others had strongly felt that discussions on a ceiling or on the elimination of groups were outside the scope of the Working Group's mandate and would have distorting effects. It had also been proposed that in the context of those suggestions, the provisions of Articles 23 and 27 of the Charter relating to permanent members and their veto powers should also be reviewed and deleted. Subsequent discussions on those matters had remained inconclusive.

(The Chairman)

32. Although the Working Group had held extensive discussions, it had been clear that further discussions and political will would be needed to set up objective criteria for the placement of Member States for the purpose of financing peace-keeping operations. The matter was therefore placed before the Committee for its consideration.

33. He suggested that the Committee should take note of the report of the Chairman of the Working Group.

34. It was so decided.

(b) **RELOCATION OF BELARUS AND UKRAINE TO THE GROUP OF MEMBER STATES SET OUT IN PARAGRAPH 3 (c) OF GENERAL ASSEMBLY RESOLUTION 43/232 (continued)**

35. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to draft decision A/C.5/48/L.78 concerning the relocation of Belarus and Ukraine to the group of Member States set out in paragraph 3 (c) of General Assembly resolution 43/232. That draft decision had been submitted on the basis of informal consultations.

36. Draft decision A/C.5/48/L.78 was adopted.

37. Mr. GOUMENNY (Ukraine) said that his delegation attached great importance to the work of the Open-ended Working Group and to the question of moving Ukraine and Belarus into group C. Unfortunately, the talks in the Working Group had not produced the desired results. The question of Belarus and Ukraine had not yet been resolved, and no decision had been made with regard to the Czech Republic and Slovakia. His delegation hoped that the problem would be resolved at the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly, in the interests of the Organization's financial health.

38. Mr. YEGOROV (Belarus) said that he endorsed the statement made by the representative of Ukraine.

AGENDA ITEM 127: SCALE OF ASSESSMENTS FOR THE APPORTIONMENT OF THE EXPENSES OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)

39. The CHAIRMAN drew attention to the question of the determination of the mandates and modalities of an ad hoc body of the General Assembly to study the implementation of the principle of the capacity to pay as a fundamental criterion for determining the scale of assessments, in pursuance of General Assembly resolution 48/223 C.

40. Mr. MAYCOCK (Barbados) said that the working group which had considered the modalities and mandate of the ad hoc body referred to in paragraph 2 of General Assembly resolution 48/223 C had met on three occasions and had held thorough discussions on the matter. Unfortunately, because of some differences of outlook and the shortage of time, it had not been possible to reach an agreed

(Mr. Maycock, Barbados)

conclusion except with regard to the need to revert to the matter at some time in the future. Some delegations had been in favour of taking it up much later in the forty-eighth session, and others had felt that it should be taken up early in the forty-ninth session. Everyone had agreed that the issue was very important and needed careful thought and instructions from capitals. He therefore suggested that the question should be deferred until a later date.

41. The CHAIRMAN said he took it that the Committee wished to take note of the oral report and to revert to the issue at a later date.

42. It was so decided.

AGENDA ITEM 121: REVIEW OF THE EFFICIENCY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE AND FINANCIAL FUNCTIONING OF THE UNITED NATIONS (continued)

DEFERRAL OF ITEMS FOR THE FORTY-NINTH SESSION OF THE GENERAL ASSEMBLY

Draft decision A/C.5/48/L.77/Rev.1

43. The CHAIRMAN said that draft decision A/C.5/48/L.77/Rev.1 was purely procedural in nature. The objective was to achieve a balance between the forty-eighth and forty-ninth sessions of the General Assembly in respect of the allocation of agenda items.

44. Draft decision A/C.5/48/L.77/Rev.1 was adopted.

45. Mr. MERIFIELD (Canada) said his delegation found it regrettable that, despite the extended resumed session, it had not been possible to follow up on the Committee's own demands to the Secretariat. Since the Committee was responsible for overseeing the Secretariat and monitoring the work of the Board of Auditors, his delegation would have liked to be able to take up the report referred to in paragraph (a) of the draft decision. The budget had established procedures whereby responses of the Secretariat to reports of the Board of Auditors would be accelerated; he hoped that the Committee would follow up that matter without delay.

46. Mr. MADDENS (Belgium) said that he endorsed the comments made by the representative of Canada; he had similar concerns about the items in paragraphs (q) and (r) of the decision.

COMPLETION OF THE COMMITTEE'S WORK

47. The CHAIRMAN said that, although the Committee had deferred a large number of issues to the forty-ninth session of the General Assembly, it could look back to the 75 formal meetings and the many more informal meetings it had held and to the many issues and areas on which it had been able to make some progress. The Committee should be reasonably satisfied with what it had been able to achieve as a service to the Organization and to Member States. It had approved the budget for the 1994-1995 biennium in unprecedented circumstances and had

(The Chairman)

achieved consensus on a resolution which would serve as the basis for the scale of assessments for the next three years. After many hours of work on item 121, it had adopted a draft resolution for the establishment of the Office for Internal Oversight Services. It had thus done much to help put the Organization on a more predictable and more stable managerial and financial basis.

48. He declared that the Committee had completed its work for the forty-eighth session.

The meeting rose at 5.35 p.m.